



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

CANADIAN MAN CONVICTED ON 14 COUNTS OF SMUGGLING MORE THAN 1 MILLION ECSTASY TABLETS *Ringleader faces 30 years to life imprisonment*

DETROIT—A Canadian citizen was convicted Tuesday of smuggling more than 1 million ecstasy tablets into the United States, announced Eastern District of Michigan U.S. Attorney Craig Morford and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agent-in-Charge Brian M. Moskowitz.

Chanh Chan Lao, 36, a Canadian citizen born in Vietnam, was found guilty by a federal jury after a six-day trial for violating 14-counts of federal law.

The jury found that Lao was accountable for smuggling more than 1 million ecstasy pills, a.k.a. MDMA, equal to 70 kilograms, into the United States. Lao was also found guilty of being the leader of a drug organization.

ICE special agents initiated the investigation into this large-scale ecstasy smuggling organization in August 2001. The investigation subsequently led to the identification of Lao as the primary supplier of several ecstasy smuggling organizations.

"I commend the efforts of U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement along with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and Canadian Customs for their hard work and dedication to this case," stated Morford. "Yesterday's guilty verdict demonstrates how the coordination of law enforcement resources and intelligence is crucial in combating drug trafficking."

"ICE will continue to pursue the leaders of smuggling organizations who attempt to violate our laws, such as the one led by Lao," said Moskowitz, who leads ICE's investigations in Detroit.

Lao is scheduled for sentencing in February. He faces a possible sentence ranging from 30 years to life imprisonment.

The Drug Enforcement Administration, Canadian Customs, and the Huron Undercover Narcotics Team provided investigative assistance. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U. S. Attorney Michael Hluchaniuk.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.